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ABSTRACT

To investigate unsuccessful principals, those individuals who have been fired, transferred, or "counseled out" of a principalship by the superintendent, nine Washington school superintendents were interviewed. Based on the conclusions from these initial interviews, a self-response questionnaire was developed and administered to 30 superintendents of school districts in Oregon with student enrollments from 400 to 19,999. The questionnaire requested information regarding: (1) the behaviors of unsuccessful principals; (2) the superintendents' methods of handling unsuccessful principals; (3) the principals' outcomes; and (4) the significant circumstances within the school districts while the superintendents identified and handled the unsuccessful principals. The findings indicate that avoidance of situations and poor administrative skills were frequent high-impact behaviors of unsuccessful principals. The action of the superintendents with the unsuccessful principals began with a conference, followed by a continuation of expectation clarification with the principals through counseling, conferencing, and goal-based evaluation. The majority of unsuccessful principals were retired or transferred while the minority resigned or were terminated. The superintendents had school board support and cited the unsuccessful principal, teachers, and parents as sources of information. No clear pattern of circumstances involving unsuccessful principals was reported by the superintendents. (7 references) (KM)

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SUPERINTENDENTS AND UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS: A LIMITED STUDY IN THE STATE OF OREGON

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SUPERINTENDENTS AND UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS: A LIMITED STUDY IN THE STATE OF OREGON

Abstract

by Joanne Lucchesi Martin
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January, 1990

The purpose of this study was to investigate unsuccessful principals. An unsuccessful principal is defined as one who has held the position of school principal but has been fired, transferred, or "counseled out" of a principalship by the superintendent. Superintendents were the respondents and identified the behaviors, processes, and outcomes of dealings with the principal. The first phase of the study was the collection of qualitative data through open-ended interviews involving nine Washington State superintendents. Based on the conclusions from the first phase of the study, the second phase was conducted. This phase was the development of a self-response questionnaire. The third phase was the administration of the self-response questionnaire. This phase was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved piloting the survey with thirty Oregon State superintendents in school districts with student

enrollment from 400 to 19,999. The data was analyzed and interpreted in terms of the questions which guided the study. These questions were: 1) What were the behaviors of unsuccessful principals? 2) How did superintendents deal with unsuccessful principals? 3) What were the outcomes for the principals? and 4) What were the significant circumstances within the school districts while the superintendents identified and dealt with the unsuccessful principals? Based on the results from the pilot survey in Oregon, the second stage will consist of modifying the content and format of the questionnaire and administering the questionnaire to one hundred eighty-five Washington State superintendents.

The important findings resulting from the study are summarized as follows: First, superintendents identified avoidance of situations and poor administrative skills as more frequent high impact behavior of unsuccessful principals. Second, superintendents reported that their first action with the unsuccessful principal was a conference. This was followed by a continuation of clarifying expectations with the principal through counseling, conferencing, and goal-based evaluation. Third, superintendents responded the majority of unsuccessful principals were retired or transferred. The minority resigned or were terminated. Fourth,

superintendents had school board support and cited the unsuccessful principal, teachers, and parents as sources of information. However, the superintendents reported no clear pattern of circumstances within the district emerged in the study.

SUPERINTENDENTS AND UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS: A STUDY

INTRODUCTION

The 1980's have seen a tremendous resurgence of public concern about the effectiveness of schools and renewed appreciation of the importance of principals (Bridges, 1982). This attention has been matched by research on principal behavior, school effectiveness, and the relationship between the two (Blumberg, 1980).

The research on effective schools (Cohen, 1982) highlights the crucial role of the building principal and the importance of the principal's leadership for instructional improvement and effectiveness. For example, in a review of research on effective principals, Bossert and his colleagues (1982) found that principals in effective schools participate in certain instructional activities with staff and students. The studies of principal behavior are more suggestive than conclusive; nevertheless, these studies have sufficiently established the character of effective principals' behavior with respect to school effectiveness.

While the literature reveals considerable knowledge about effective principals, not all principals are effective. Some principals are ineffective while maintaining their position in the principalship. Other principals are unsuccessful and leave the principalship. For purposes of this proposal, an unsuccessful principal is defined as one who has held the position of school principal but has been fired, transferred, or "counseled out" of a principalship by the superintendent. It is unknown the percentage of principals who are unsuccessful, much about their behaviors, or how they are removed from the principalship. This is a study designed to investigate the behaviors

of unsuccessful principals, superintendents' actions with the unsuccessful principals, and the outcomes of dealing with those principals.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine how superintendents dealt with unsuccessful principals, that is, a principal who has been removed from a principalship. In order to better understand unsuccessful principals, it was useful to address the following questions: (1) What were the behaviors of unsuccessful principals? (2) How did superintendents deal with unsuccessful principals? (3) What were the outcomes for the principals? And, (4) What were the significant circumstances within the school districts while the superintendents identified and dealt with the unsuccessful principals? This study investigated the behaviors, processes, and outcomes of dealing with unsuccessful principals.

RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY, AND PROCEDURES

This section describes the design of the study, the methods, and procedures completed.

Design

In order to respond to the questions developed and to give specificity to the purpose of the study, a three-part design was developed. Part I was the collection of qualitative data through open-ended interviews. Since the literature lacked information on how superintendents dealt with unsuccessful principals, the interviews

allowed the investigator to obtain indepth data and allowed the flexibility to ask additional probing questions when necessary. Part I guided the development of Part II. Part II was the transformation of the interview data into a self-response questionnaire. In order to collect standardized quantifiable data from superintendents, the interview data were developed into a self-response questionnaire. Part III was the collection of the standardized quantifiable data from superintendents in both Oregon and Washington States. The questionnaire instrument provided comparable data from all subjects in the sample.

Limitations

The study was limited to thirty superintendents in Oregon State. Generalizability should be done with caution in Oregon State and to other states with similar legal and environmental conditions.

Methodology

Consistent with the design of the study, a three-phase research methodology was conducted. The first phase consisted of conducting open-ended interviews involving nine Washington State superintendents. The purpose of the first phase was to seek qualitative data about the experiences superintendents have had with unsuccessful principals. Based on the conclusions from the first phase of the study, the second phase was conducted. The second phase was the development of a self-response questionnaire. The purpose of the second phase was to develop an instrument to systematically gather additional data. The third phase was the

administration of the self-response questionnaire. This phase was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved piloting the survey with thirty Oregon State superintendents in school districts with student enrollment from 400 to 19,999. Based on the results from the pilot survey in Oregon, the second stage will consist of modifying the contents and format of the questionnaire and administering the questionnaire to one hundred eighty-five Washington State superintendents. The purpose of this phase was to collect data from superintendents regarding unsuccessful principals which will identify the typical behaviors of unsuccessful principals, the typical actions superintendents take in dealing with unsuccessful principals, and the consequences or outcomes of the superintendents' actions.

Procedures

The procedures are consistent with the design and methodology of the study. The procedures included interviews, instrument development, and administration of the instrument.

Interviews

In the first phase, nine Washington State superintendents, who had been superintendents for at least three years and held a full time position as a school district superintendent, were interviewed. These superintendents were selected based upon their reputation for being effective, their willingness to be interviewed, their reasonable proximity to the investigator, and number of years from retirement.

The purpose of the exploratory interview was to solicit data regarding each superintendent's experience with unsuccessful principals. The questions which guided the study were used to develop open-ended questions used during the interviews. The questions were sequenced to establish rapport with the interviewee, seek their opinions, and gather substantive data on their past experiences with unsuccessful principals.

The first three questions were developed to gather background information about the superintendent and establish rapport. The questions were: (1) How long have you been a superintendent? (2) Who evaluates principals in your district? (3) What do you believe to be some behaviors of effective principals? Questions four, five, and six focused on the unsuccessful principal and his/her behaviors. These questions were: (4) What makes a principal unsuccessful? (5) Have you dealt with unsuccessful principal(s)? If so, at what levels were these principals? (6) What do you believe was the cause of the principal's problems? Question seven was designed to find out how the superintendent dealt with unsuccessful principals. The question was: (7) How did you deal with that principal? Why did you deal with the individual in that manner? The next set of questions solicited information on the outcome for the principal. The questions were: (8) What was the outcome of the situation? (9) Have you ever dismissed an unsuccessful principal? (10) Have you ever moved an unsuccessful principal involuntarily? (11) Have you managed/persuaded to get an unsuccessful principal to exit the system? Question number twelve asked how the superintendent identified or received information about the unsuccessful principal. The question was: (12) How did you find out about the unsuccessful principal?

Question number thirteen allows the interviewee to add any additional comments. The last question was: (13) Is there anything you want to comment on further?

The interview data were transcribed and categorized according to the questions which guided the study and the descriptive data on the superintendents. The nine superintendents interviewed had between four and twenty-one years of experience as superintendent and each had had experience with unsuccessful principals. None of the superintendents were planning immediate retirement.

From the interview data, some tentative conclusions can be drawn. First, unsuccessful principals hold positions at all school levels. That is to say, principals deemed unsuccessful have been elementary principals, middle/junior high principals, or high school principals. Second, the principals appeared to have several common behaviors that the superintendents deemed unsuccessful. Third, the superintendents acted in a variety of ways when dealing with the unsuccessful principals depending on the circumstances within the district. Superintendents have involuntarily moved, dismissed, or counseled out of the principalship unsuccessful principals. Fourth, the principals' outcomes depended upon the circumstances within the district and the options available to the superintendent. Based upon these conclusions, the second phase was completed.

Instrument Development

The second phase of the study was to develop a self-response questionnaire instrument based on the exploratory interviews. The purpose of the second phase was to gather a large body of systematically collected data to provide more specificity

and generalizability to the conclusions reached in the first phase. The instrument was developed based on the questions which guided the study and the analysis of the data from the exploratory interviews. The questionnaire was designed to gather information on the superintendent's most recent experience with an unsuccessful principal. The "most recent unsuccessful principal experience" was an attempt to provide information on a typical unsuccessful principal versus the superintendent's most memorable unsuccessful principal.

The instrument developed was divided into five parts (Appendix A). The first part asked questions on the background information of the respondent and the district where he/she was employed. The second part of the questionnaire asked the respondent to identify the last unsuccessful principal he/she had experienced. In part three, the behaviors of unsuccessful principals were requested. Part four reviewed the process of dealing with an unsuccessful principal and the principal's outcome. Part five asked the circumstances present within the district during the time the superintendent dealt with the unsuccessful principal.

Administration of Instrument

The third phase of the study was the administration of the self-response questionnaire. The purpose of this phase was to gather data on unsuccessful principals, analyze and interpret the data, and report the findings. This phase was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved a pilot study in Oregon State.

The survey was mailed to thirty superintendents in the state of Oregon. The stratified random sample comprised of ten superintendents each from small, mid-size,

and large school districts. The small school districts were those districts with student enrollment of 400-999 and the mid-size were those districts with student enrollment of 1,000-4,999. The large school districts had student enrollment of 5,000-19,999. Small school districts below the student enrollment of 400, or small school districts whose administrators worked as building principals, were not used in the study. In very large school districts exceeding the 20,000 student enrollment, superintendents often do not deal directly with principals themselves and consequently, have little interaction with them. Two weeks following the initial mailing, a postcard reminder was sent to those superintendents who had not yet completed and returned the questionnaire.

Based on the results from the pilot in Oregon, the second stage will consist of modifying the content and format of the questionnaire and administering the questionnaire to one hundred eighty-five Washington State superintendents.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This investigation was designed to identify the behaviors, processes, and outcomes of dealings with principals the superintendents deem as unsuccessful. A total of thirty Oregon State school districts, ten from each small (400-999), mid-sized (1,000-4,999), and large (5,000-19,999) school districts were included in the study. The superintendents of these thirty school districts were requested to complete a self-response questionnaire.

This analysis considers the four questions which guided the study. These questions were: (1) What were the behaviors of unsuccessful principals? (2) How did superintendents deal with unsuccessful principals? (3) What were the outcomes for the principals? And, (4) What were the significant circumstances within the school

districts while the superintendents identified and dealt with the unsuccessful principals?

The analysis is divided into six sections. The first section, entitled **Self-Response Questionnaire and Demographic Data**, presents an analysis of the characteristics of the superintendents. The section concludes with general statements about these respondents.

The second section, entitled **Unsuccessful Principals' Demographic Data,** presents an analysis of questionnaire data relevant to unsuccessful principals' background. This section closes with several statements regarding unsuccessful principals. The third section, **Unsuccessful Principals' Behaviors,** addresses the behaviors which best describe the unsuccessful principal that led to being fired, transferred, or "counseled out" of a principalship. This section concludes with a general statement about unsuccessful principals' behaviors. The fourth section is entitled **Actions of the Superintendent.** It addresses the process by which the superintendent dealt with the unsuccessful principal. This section closes with statements regarding the process. The fifth section, entitled **Unsuccessful Principals' Outcomes,** addresses the third question which guided the study. This section presents an analysis of the career outcomes for the unsuccessful principal and concludes with a general statement about those outcomes. The sixth and final section, **Circumstances Within the District,** addresses the circumstances within the district while the superintendent dealt with the unsuccessful principal. The section closes with several general statements.

Self-Response Questionaire & Demographic Data

The self-response questionnaire was mailed to the superintendents of thirty Oregon school districts. The stratified random sample was comprised of ten superintendents from small, mid-size, and large school districts. The small school

districts were those school districts with a student enrollment of 400-999, the mid-size were those districts with a student enrollment of 1,000-4,999, and the large school districts had a student enrollment of 5,000-19,999. The self-response questionnaire used in this study was a survey instrument constructed by the researcher. Thirty questionnaires were mailed and each was accompanied by a cover letter (See Appendix B). Of the thirty self-response questionnaires mailed, twenty-nine, or 96%, were returned. The rate of return by school district size was as follows: small, nine or 96%; mid-size, ten or 100%; and large, ten or 100%. Table 1 displays the number of questionnaires mailed and returned and the percent returned.

Among the respondents who completed the survey, twenty-six or 92% were superintendents, one or 3% was a director of personnel, and one or 3% was an administrative assistant. Table 2 displays the positions and/or titles of the administrators who completed the questionnaire by school district size.

The superintendent respondents were predominantely male. Eight or 88% small size school district superintendents were male, and one or 11% was female. Seven or 100% of the mid-size school district superintendents and ten or 100% of the large size school district superintendents were male. Table 3 displays the number and percent of respondents by gender and by school district size.

Superintendents also reported their age. A difference was observed in the respondents by school district size. Small-size school district superintendents' mean age was 45.6 years. Mid-size school district superintendents' mean age was 51.7 years, and large school district superintendents' mean age was 54.4 years (Table 4).

Respondents' average number of years in their present position varied according to school district size. Small school district superintendents' average length of current position was 6.3 years. The mid-size school district superintendents' average length in their current position was 4.4 years, and the large school district superintendents' mean length in their current position was 7.1 years (Table 5).

TABLE 1

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF QUESTIONNAIRES MAILED AND RETURNED BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

	Number Mailed	Number Returned	Percent Returned
Small School District	10	9	96%
Mid-Size School District	10	10	100%
Large School District	10	10	100%

TABLE 2

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

POSITIONS AND/OR TITLES OF ADMINISTRATORS COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

	Superintendent	Administrative Assistant	Director of Personnel	Principal	No Response
Small School District	9				1
Mid-Size School District	7	1	1		1
Large School District	10				

TABLE 3

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

	Male		Female	
	#	%	#	%
Small School District	8	88	1	11
Mid-Size School District	7	100	0	0
Large School District	10	100	0	0

TABLE 4

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

RESPONDENTS AVERAGE AGE BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

Small School District	45.6 Years of Age
Mid-Size School District	51.7 Years of Age
Large School District	54.4 Years of Age

TABLE 5

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

RESPONDENTS' AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

Small School District	6.3	Years
Mid-Size School District	4.4	Years
Large School District	7.1	Years

Little difference was observed between school district size and the superintendents' employment prior to being hired in their present position. In small school districts, eight or 89% of the superintendents were hired from outside the school district, while one or 11% was hired from within the school district. In mid-size school districts, five or 71% of the superintendents were hired from outside the school district and two or 29% from within the school district (Table 6). In large-size school districts, nine or 90% were hired from outside the school district, while one or 10% was hired within the school district.

The previous job titles of superintendents varied according to school district size. In small school districts, superintendents' previous positions were assistant superintendent, two or 22%; assistant superintendent, one or 11%; superintendent/principal, two or 22%; director of personnel, one or 11%; middle school principal, one or 11%; and principal, two or 22%. The mid-size school district superintendents' previous job titles included more central office positions than building level positions. The data reported two or 29% as superintendent and assistant superintendent. One or 14% responded their previous position as director of personnel, director of curriculum, or high school or middle school principal. Six or 60% of the large school district superintendents reported their previous job position as superintendent. One or 10% reported their previous position as assistant superintendent, assistant superintendent for program, deputy superintendent, or director (Table 7).

School district superintendents reported supervising unsuccessful principals. Table 8 displays the number and percentage of superintendents by school district size who have dealt with unsuccessful principals. Five or 55% of small school district superintendents reported that they had supervised an unsuccessful principal. Four or 57% of mid-size school district superintendents and ten or 100% of large school district superintendents revealed that they had supervised unsuccessful principals.

TABLE 6

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS BY EMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO BEING HIRED IN PRESENT POSITION.

	Within District		Outside District	
	#	Per Cent	#	Per Cent
Small School District	1	11	8	89
Mid-Size School District	2	29	5	71
Large School District	1	10	9	90

TABLE 7

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS PREVIOUS JOB TITLE BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

	Small		Mid-Size		Large	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Superintendent	2	22	2	29	6	60
Assistant Superintendent	1	11	2	29	1	10
Assistant Superintendent for Program	0	0	0	0	1	10
Deputy Superintendent	0	0	0	0	1	10
Superintendent/Principal	2	22	0	0	0	0
Director of Personnel	1	11	1	14	0	0
Director of Curriculum/	0	0	1	14	0	0
Director	0	0	0	0	1	10
High School Principal	0	0	1	14	0	0
Middle School Principal	1	11	0	0	0	0
Principal	2	22	0	0	0	0

TABLE 8

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE WHO HAVE DEALT WITH UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS.

	#	%
Small School District	5	55
Mid-Size School District	4	57
Large School District	10	100

Summary

In this section, the data analyzed reviews the respondents characteristics. Twenty-six superintendents, one director of personnel, and one administrative assistant completed the survey. The superintendents' mean age varied by school district size. Large school district superintendents' mean age was 54, while mid-size school district superintendents' mean age was 51. Small school district superintendents' had the youngest mean age at 45. Ninety-six percent of the superintendents are male. None of the respondents were principals at the time of the survey.

The mean length of the superintendents current position varied with the size of the school district. Large school district superintendents' mean length was seven years, mid-size school district superintendents' four years, and small school district superintendents' mean length of position was six years. Sixty percent of the superintendents' previous job titles in large and mid-size school districts were superintendent, assistant superintendent, or deputy superintendent. In small school districts, superintendents' previous positions varied from the central office to building principalship.

Since their previous position, 84% of the superintendents were employed by a different district and fifteen percent were employed by the same district. Nine superintendents were employed by small school districts, seven by mid-size school districts, and ten by large school districts.

Unsuccessful Principals' Demographic Data

To gather background information about unsuccessful principals, respondents were requested to answer six items on the self-response questionnaire about the unsuccessful principal. The unsuccessful principals were predominately male. In the small school district, four or 80% of the unsuccessful principals were male, and one or

20% were female. The mid-size school district reported four or 100% of their unsuccessful principals as male. Eight or 80% of the unsuccessful principals in the large school districts were male and two or 20% were female (Table 9).

The unsuccessful principals were employed in all three types of school districts: small, mid-size, and large. The majority of the unsuccessful principals were in large school districts with ten or 53%. Mid-size school districts had five or 26% of the unsuccessful principals, and small school districts had four or 21% of the unsuccessful principals in this study (Table 10).

A higher percentage of unsuccessful principals were reported at the elementary and high school levels. Small school districts had two or 40% unsuccessful elementary principals, one or 20% at the middle level, and two or 40% at the high school. The mid-size school district had one or 25% of their unsuccessful principals at the elementary and middle level. Two or 50% were at the high school. The large school district had five or 50% unsuccessful elementary principals, one or 10% at the middle level, and four or 40% at the high school (Table 11).

The average number of years of experience of the unsuccessful principal varied little between the three types of school districts. The mean length of the unsuccessful principal in a small school district was 5.6 years, while in mid-size and large school districts, the mean length of the unsuccessful principal was six years (Table 12).

In small and large school districts, the majority of unsuccessful principals were hired from outside. Small school district respondents reported that four or 80% of the unsuccessful principals were hired from outside the district, while one or 20% were promoted within the district. Large school districts reported six or 60% were hired from outside the district and four or 40% were promoted within the district. Differences were observed in the mid-size school districts. One or 25% of the unsuccessful principals were new to the district and three or 75% were promoted from within (Table 13).

TABLE 9

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS BY GENDER.

	Male		Female	
	#	%	#	%
Small School District	4	80	1	20
Mid-Size School District	4	100	0	0
Large School District	8	80	2	20

TABLE 10

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS EMPLOYED BY TYPE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT.

	#	%
Small School District	4	21
Mid-Size School District	5	26
Large School District	10	53

TABLE 11

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS ACCORDING TO LEVEL.

	ELEMENTARY		MIDDLE LEVEL		HIGH SCHOOL	
	#	Percent	#	Percent	#	Percent
Small School District	2	40	1	20	2	40
Mid-Size School District	1	25	1	25	2	50
Large School District	5	50	1	10	4	40

TABLE 12

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS OF THE UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALSHIP.

Small School District	5.6 Years
Mid-Size School District	6.0 Years
Large School District	6.0 Years

TABLE 13

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS BY EMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO BEING HIRED BY RESPONDENT'S DISTRICT.

	New to District		Promoted Within District	
	#	%	#	%
Small School District	4	80	1	20
Mid-Size School District	1	25	3	75
Large School District	6	60	4	40

Summary

In this section, the demographic data on unsuccessful principals has been analyzed. Nineteen of the respondents, or 73%, indicated that they had superivsed a principal whom they had to fire, transfer, or "counsel out" of the principalship. Sixteen or 84% of the unsuccessful principals were male, while three or 16% of the unsuccessful principals were female. Unsuccessful principals had been employed in all three types of school districts with the largest percentage, 53%, in large school districts. The majority of unsuccessful principals in this study tended to be at the elementary or high school level. Three or 16% were middle level/junior high principals.

The average length of the unsuccessful principalship was six years. In the small and large-size school districts, most of the unsuccessful principals were hired new to the district rather than promoted to the principalship within the district, while the opposite was revealed for mid-size school districts.

The respondents in small and mid-size districts indicated that they had dealt with an average of two unsuccessful principals. Whereas, large school district superintendents had dealt with an average of five. Eleven or 64% of the respondents indicated that this last case of the unsuccessful principal was typical of other unsuccessful principals. Six or 35% reported the last case was not typical of an unsuccessful principal.

Unsuccessful Principals' Behaviors

The first question that guided the study was: What were the behaviors of unsuccessful principals. To address this question, respondents were asked to rate fourteen behaviors on the questionnaire as they best described the unsuccessful principal which led to them being fired, transferred or "counseled out" of a principalship. The behaviors included: (a) lack of influence over adults, (b) lack of

influence over staff, (c) avoidance of situations, (d) avoidance of people, (e) autocratic, (f) unmotivated in the principalship, (g) inflexible, (h) inability to relate to ethnic populations, (i) lack of vision, (j) poor community relations, (k) perfectionistic, (l) poor administrative skills, (m) insubordinate, and (n) sexually involved with staff. The respondents rated the behaviors as having high impact, some impact, or no impact on the principal being fired, transferred, or "counseled out" of a principalship. In the high impact category, the majority of responses from small school districts were: avoidance of situations, three or 60%; lack of vision, three or 60%; and poor administrative skills, four or 80%. The majority responses in the no impact category from small school districts were: autocratic, three or 60%; inability to relate to ethnic populations, three or 60%; perfectionistic, four or 80%; and sexually involved with staff, four or 80% (Table 14).

The mid-size school district high impact behaviors differed from both small and large school districts. The majority response was poor community relations, three or 75%. The no impact behaviors of the unsuccessful principals were similar to small and large school districts. The majority no impact behaviors from the mid-size school districts were: inability to relate to ethnic populations, four or 100%; perfectionistic, three or 75%; and sexually involved with staff, four or 100% (Table 15).

In the large school districts, the majority high impact behaviors were similar to the small school districts. The high impact behaviors included: lack of influence over staff, seven or 70%; avoidance of situations, seven or 70%; and poor administrative skills, six or 60%. The no impact behaviors were similar to the small and mid-size districts. The majority of no impact behaviors in the large school district were: inability to relate to ethnic populations, seven or 70%; perfectionistic, nine or 90%; sexually involved with staff, nine or 90%; and insubordinate, nine or 90% (Table 16).

TABLE 14

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS WITH HIGH IMPACT AND NO IMPACT BEHAVIOR REPORTED BY SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

	High Impact Behaviors		No Impact Behaviors	
	#	%	#	%
Avoidance of Situations	3	60		
Lack of Vision	3	60		
Poor Administrative Skills	4	80		
Autocratic			3	60
Inability to Relate to Ethnic Populations			3	60
Perfectionistic			4	80
Sexually Involved with Staff			4	80

TABLE 15

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS WITH HIGH IMPACT AND NO IMPACT BEHAVIORS REPORTED BY MID-SIZE SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

	High Impact Behaviors		No Impact Behaviors	
	#	%	#	%
Poor Community Relations	3	75		
Inability to Relate to Ethnic Populations			4	100
Perfectionist			3	75
Sexually Involved with Staff			4	100

TABLE 16

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS WITH HIGH IMPACT AND NO IMPACT BEHAVIORS REPORTED BY LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

	HIGH IMPACT BEHAVIORS		NO IMPACT BEHAVIORS	
	#	%	#	%
Lack of Influence Over Staff	7	70		
Avoidance of Situations	7	70		
Poor Administrative Skills	6	60		
Inability to Relate to Ethnic Populations			7	70
Perfectionistic			9	90
Sexually Involved with Staff			9	90
Insubordinate			9	90

Summary

In this section, the behaviors of unsuccessful principals have been analyzed. There appears to be a difference in the high impact behaviors according to school district size. The small and large school district superintendents reported similar behaviors of unsuccessful principals as avoidance of situations and poor administrative skills. In addition, the small school districts had lack of vision as a high impact benavior. Whereas, the large school districts listed lack of influence over staff.

The no impact behaviors reported showed some consistency among small, mid-size, and large school districts. Inability to relate to ethnic populations, perfectionistic, and sexually involved with staff were rated as no impact behaviors by the three types of school districts. Additionally, the small school district had autocratic as a no impact behavior, and large school districts had insubordinate as a no impact behavior.

Actions of the Superintendent

The second question which guided the study was: How did superintendents deal with unsuccessful principals. To address this question, the respondents were asked to number in order the actions they took in dealing with the unsuccessful principal. The actions included: conferencing, goal-based evaluation, counseling, probation, developing an improvement plan, salary freeze, shadowing the unsuccessful principal, and leave with pay.

In small school districts, the superintendents' first action was conferencing, five or 100%. The second actions included: counseling, one or 20%; goal-based evaluation, three or 60%; and shadowing, one or 20%. The third actions of the superintendents varied. Goal-based evaluation received one or 20%; improvement plan, two or 40%; salary freeze, one or 20%; and counseling, one or 20%. Four of the small school districts' superintendents indicated a fourth action. Two or 50% reported counseling, and two or 50% reported developing an improvement plan. Three of the

small school districts' superintendents listed a fifth action. The actions recorded were: salary freeze, one or 33%; written reprimand, one or 33%; and counseling, one or 33%.

The mid-size school district superintendents' first action, like that of the small-size school districts', was conferencing, four or 100%. The second actions were counseling at two or 50% and goal-based evaluation at two or 50%. Three or 75% of the superintendents reported their third action as developing an improvement plan while one or 25% reported the third action as counseling. Only one superintendent revealed a fourth action. That action was goal-based evaluation.

The large school district superintendents' first actions included: conferencing, six or 60%; goal-based evaluation, two or 20%; and counseling, two or 20%. The second actions varied from counseling at five or 50% to goal-based evaluation at three or 30%, and conferencing at two or 20%. Developing an improvement plan represented the majority of the third actions at six or 60%. Goal-based evaluation and counseling each received two or 20%. Five of the superintendents recorded a fourth action. The actions included: counseling, one or 20%; developing an improvement plan, two or 40%; shadowing, one or 20%; and salary freeze, one or 20%. Three superintendents reported a fifth action. One or 33% indicated developing an improvement plan; one or 33% responded with retirement/resignation; and one or 33% recorded probation as a fifth action. Only one superintendent revealed a sixth action. The action was a salary freeze (Table 17).

Summary

The actions of the superintendents in all three types of school districts showed some consistency. The majority of the first actions was a conference with the unsuccessful principal. The second and third actions were a continuation of talking with the unsuccessful principal and clarifying expectations for the principal. The majority of superintendents from all three districts listed their second and third actions

TABLE 17

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS ' ACTIONS IN DEALING WITH THE UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPAL.

	SMALL		MID-SIZE		LARGE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
ACTION #1						
Conferencing	5	100	4	100	6	60
Goal-based Evaluation					2	20
Counseling					2	20
ACTION #2						
Counseling	1	20	2	50	5	50
Goal-based Evaluation	3	60	2	50	3	30
Shadowing	1	20				
Conferencing					2	20
ACTION #3						
Goal-based Evaluation	1	20			2	20
Improvement Plan	2	40	3	75	6	60
Salary Freeze	1	20				
Counseling	1	20	1	25	2	20
ACTION #4						
Counseling	2	50			1	20
Improvement Plan	2	50			2	40
Goal-based Evaluation			1	100		
Shadowing					1	20
Salary Freeze					1	20
ACTION #5						
Salary Freeze	1	33				
Written Reprimand	1	33				
Couseling	1	33				
Improvement Plan					1	33
Retirement/Resignation					1	33
Probation					1	33
ACTION #6						
Salary Freeze					1	100

as counseling, conferencing, goal-based evaluation. The superintendents that listed a fourth, fifth, or sixth action continued to list talking with the principal or more progressive actions. The majority of the superintendents responded with counseling, developing an improvement plan, and a goal-based evaluation. The more progressive actions of a salary freeze, written reprimand, and probation were cited by small or large school districts.

Unsuccessful Principals' Outcomes

The third question which guided the study was: What were the outcomes for the principals. To address this question, the respondents were asked to number in order the outcomes of the unsuccessful principal. The outcomes included: (a) termination, (b) resignation, (c) retirement, (d) leave of absence, (e) employment in education out of the district, (f) new career out of education, and (g) transfer. If the unsuccessful principal was transferred, the respondents were asked to indicate if the transfer was voluntary or involuntary. In addition, the respondents were asked to indicate to which position the unsuccessful principal was transferred.

Small school district superintendents revealed that one or 20% of the unsuccessful principals retired; three or 60% transferred; and one or 20% resigned. Mid-size school districts reported four or 100% retired. In large school districts, two or 20% of the unsuccessful principals were terminated; four or 40% retired; three or 30% transferred; and one or 10% resigned (Table 18).

In the small and large school districts, five unsuccessful principals were transferred. Small school districts transferred one or 33% to another principalship in a smaller building; one or 33% to activity director; and one or 33% to A.D./classroom teacher/ assistant principal position. In the large school districts, two or 100% were transferred to classroom teacher positions (Table 19).

TABLE 18

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS' OUTCOMES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

	SMALL		MID-SIZE		LARGE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Terminated					2	20
Retired	1	20	4	100	4	40
Transferred	3	60			3	30
Resigned	1	20			1	10

TABLE 19

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS' NEW POSITION ASSIGNMENT.

	SMALL		MID-SIZE		LARGE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Classroom Teacher					2	100
Another Principalship in small building	1	33				
Activity Director	1	33				
A.D./Classroom Teacher/ Assistant Principal	1	33				

The respondents were also asked to indicate whether the principal's transfer to a new position was a voluntary or involuntary action. In the small school districts, one or 33% reported that the principal was transferred voluntarily, and two or 66% were transferred involuntarily. No transfers were reported from mid-size school districts. Large school district superintendents listed two or 100% voluntary transfers (Table 20).

In addition, the respondents were requested to indicate additional career outcomes of the unsuccessful principal. In small school districts, only one or 20% of the additional career outcome was recorded. After the principal was transferred to a smaller building within the same school district, that individual resigned and subsequently was employed in the principalship in another state. Mid-size school districts reported no additional career outcomes for the four or 100% of the retired principals. Large school districts indicated that two or 20% of the principals were employed out of the school district. One of those principals was employed in the principalship, and no information was provided for the other principal (Table 21).

Finally, the respondents were asked to indicate the approximate number of years they had dealt with the unsuccessful principal. Small school district superintendents' average time spent in dealing with the unsuccessful principals was 3.5 years. Mid-size school district superintendents' average time spent was 2.3 years, and large school districts' average time was 2.7 years (Table 22).

Summary

In this section, the outcomes of unsuccessful principals have been analyzed. There does not appear to be a typical outcome for unsuccessful principals. Large and small school districts reported more varied outcomes, while mid-size school districts reported that 100% of their unsuccessful principals retired. The small and large school districts each listed retired, transferred, and resigned as outcomes for their unsuccessful principals. In addition, the large school districts had two unsuccessful

TABLE 20

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPAL TRANSFERS

	SMALL		MID-SIZE		LARGE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
VOLUNTARY	1	33			2	100
INVOLUNTARY	2	66				

TABLE 21

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF ADDITIONAL CAREER OUTCOMES OF UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE.

	Small School District		Mid-Size School District		Large School District	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Principalship in Another State	1	20				
Employment Out-Of-District					1	10
Employment Out-Of-District/ Another Principalship					1	10
No Response	4	80	4	100	8	80

TABLE 22

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

AVERAGE LENGTH OF YEARS RESPONDENTS DEALT WITH UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS.

SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICT	3.5 YEARS
MID-SIZED SCHOOL DISTRICT	2.3 YEARS
LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICT	2.7 YEARS

principals terminated. Five principals were transferred to new positions within small and large school districts. Mid-size reported no transfers. The small school districts transferred their unsuccessful principals into smaller building principalships, district program positions, and classroom teacher positions, while large school districts listed transfers to classroom teacher positions only. These transfers were made by the unsuccessful principals both voluntarily and involuntarily. Small school districts differed from large school districts in that they transferred some of their principals involuntarily.

Both small and large school districts reported the additional career outcomes of three of their unsuccessful principals. Each of these principals were employed by a new school district. One was employed in another principalship in another state, one was employed out-of-district, and one was employed out-of-district in another principalship. Mid-size school districts did not reveal any additional career outcomes of their unsuccessful principals. The majority of unsuccessful principals retired or were transferred. The minority resigned or were terminated. However, these outcomes varied according to school district size.

Finally, superintendents from all three districts reported that they dealt with the unsuccessful principal between two and three years. Small school districts appeared to spend a longer period of time at 3.5 years.

CIRCUMSTANCES WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The fourth and final question that guided the study was: What were the significant circumstances within the school districts while the superintendents identified and dealt with the unsuccessful principal. To address this question, respondents were asked to respond to three questions. The items addressed school board support, significant circumstances in the school district, and sources of information for the superintendents.

All three types of school districts reported the majority of superintendents had school board support in dealing with the unsuccessful principal. Small school districts had four or 80% school board approval while one small school district reported in the other response category. The response indicated a four to three school board split to support the superintendent in dealing with the unsuccessful principal. Mid-size and large school districts each had 100% support for the superintendent (Table 23).

The significant circumstances in the districts were varied and did not produce any majority response. Small school districts responded with staff problems at three or 20%. Mid-size districts indicated good staff morale and community relations at four or 35% and two or 17% respectively. The large school districts cited three circumstances within their districts. Good staff morale received four or 15%, staff problems received six or 22%, and levy loss received four or 15% (Table 24).

The last item addressed sources of information for the superintendent. Small school districts had no majority response. These sources of information included: contact with the principal, four or 26%; teachers, five or 33%; parents, two or 13%; support staff, two or 13%; and one or 6% for school board and students. In mid-size school districts, superintendents' sources of information displayed no pattern. The sources of information included: contact with the principal, four or 26%; teachers, four or 26%; parents, three or 20%; support staff, one or 6%; central office, two or 13%; and community, one or 13%. No clear pattern for sources of information emerged in the large school districts' data. The sources of information included: contact with the principal, six or 23%; teachers, seven or 27%; parents, five or 19%; central office, five or 19%; and students, community, personal supervison, one or 3% (Table 25).

Summary

In this section, the circumstances within the district while the superintendent was dealing with the unsuccessful principal have been analyzed. The majority of the

TABLE 23

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS HAVING SCHOOL BOARD SUPPORT.

	YES		NO		OTHER	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	80			1	20
MID-SIZE SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	100				
LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICT	10	100				

TABLE 24

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF SIGNIFICANT CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT.

	SMALL		MID-SIZE		LARGE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
GOOD STAFF MORALE			4	35	4	15
STAFF PROBLEMS	3	20			6	22
LEVY LOSS					4	15
GOOD COMMUNITY RELATIONS			2	17		

TABLE 25

SURVEY IN OREGON STATE

NUMBER & PERCENT OF SOURCES OF INFORMATION REPORTED BY RESPONDENTS.

	SMALL		MID-SIZE		LARGE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Contact with Principal	4	26	4	26	6	23
Teachers	5	33	4	26	7	27
Parents	2	13	3	20	5	19
School Board	1	6				
Support Staff	2	13	1	6		
Students	1	6			1	3
Central Office			2	13	5	19
Community			1	13	1	3
Personal Supervision					1	3

respondents indicated that they had school board support while dealing with the unsuccessful principal. The most frequently cited significant circumstances were good staff morale and staff problems. The most frequently cited sources of information were contact with the principal, teachers, and parents. In each case, no clear pattern developed.

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine how superintendents dealt with unsuccessful principals, that is, those principals who have been removed from the principalship. This study was conducted in two parts. Part I was the collection of qualitative data through open-ended interviews. Guided by the interviews, a self-response questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was mailed to the superintendents of thirty Oregon school districts. The stratified random sample was comprised of ten superintendents from small, mid-size, and large school districts. The small school districts were those districts with a student enrollment of 400-999, and the mid-size were those districts with a student enrollment of 1,000-4,999. The large school districts had a student enrollment of 5,000-19,999. Twenty-seven superintendents responded to the questionnaire for a response rate of 86.6%. Of the twenty-seven responses, 37% were completed by superintendents in large school districts, 29.6% were completed by superintendents in mid-size school districts, and 33.3% were completed by small school district superintendents.

This section is devoted to the summary of data secured from the survey instrument. The data are presented in two parts. The first part presents general findings, which describes the respondents' and unsuccessful principals' demographic data. In the second part, findings specific to the research questions are reviewed.

General Findings

The survey form requested background information from each respondent and demographic data about the unsuccessful principals. The results are listed below.

Respondents' Demographic Data

1. Age

   The superintendents' mean age varied by school district size. Large school district superintendents' mean age was 54, while mid-size school district superintendents' mean age was 51. Small school district superintendents had the youngest mean age at 45.

2. Gender

   Ninety-six percent of the superintendents were male.

3. Number of Years in Present Position

   The mean length of the superintendents' current position varied with the size of the school district. Large school district superintendents' mean length was seven years, mid-size school district superintendents' four years, and small school district superintendents' mean length of position was six years.

4. Employment Position Prior to being Hired in Present Position

   The superintendents' previous positions varied according to school district size. Sixty percent of the superintendents' previous job titles in large and mid-size school districts were superintendent, assistant superintendent, or deputy superintendent. In small school districts, superintendents previous position varied from central office to building principalship.

5. Dealing with Unsuccessful Principals

   Superintendents from small, mid-size, and large school districts reported dealing with unsuccessful principals.

Unsuccessful Principals' Demographic Data

1. Gender

   Sixteen or 84% of the unsuccessful principals were male, while three or 16% of the unsuccessful principals were female. The results do not suggest that men are more unsuccessful as principals than women, only that more men are principals.

2. Number of Years in the Unsuccessful Principalship

   The average length of employment for the unsuccessful principal was six years.

3. Building Grade Configuration

   Unsuccessful principals were employed at all building grade configurations. More unsuccessful principals were identified at the elementary and high school level.

4. Employment Prior to being Hired in Unsuccessful Principalship

   In large and small school districts, unsuccessful principalships occurred more frequently when hired from outside the school district. In mid-size school districts, unsuccessful principalships occurred more frequently when promoted to the principalship from within the school district.

Findings Specific to the Research Questions

This section analyzes the superintendents' responses to the four questions which guided the study: (1) What were the behaviors of unsuccessful principals? (2) How did superintendents deal with unsuccessful principals? (3) What were the outcomes for the principals? and (4) What were the significant circumstances within the school districts while the superintendent identified and dealt with the unsuccessful principals? Based on these questions, the following findings are supported by the questionnaire data.

Unsuccessful Principals' Behaviors

Selected school superintendents in Oregon State:

1. identified avoidance of situations and poor administrative skills as more frequent high impact behaviors of unsuccessful principals;
2. reported differences in high impact behaviors of unsuccessful principals according to school district size;
3. listed lack of vision as a high impact behavior of unsuccessful principals in small school districts;
4. reported lack of influence over staff as a high impact behavior of unsuccessful principals in large school districts;
5. cited inability to relate to ethnic populations, perfectionistic, and sexually involved with staff as low impact behaviors of unsuccessful principals.

Actions of the Superintendent

Selected school superintendents in Oregon State:

1. reported their first action with the unsuccessful principal was a conference;
2. cited their additional actions with the unsuccessful principal was a continuation of talking with the principal and clarifying expectations;
3. listed counseling, conferencing, goal-based evaluation as their second and third action with the unsuccessful principal;
4. indicated their fourth, fifth, and sixth actions as a continuation of talking with the principal or more progressive actions;
5. identified freezing the salary, written reprimand, and probation as their progressive actions in large and small school districts.

Unsuccessful Principals' Outcomes

Selected school superintendents in Oregon State:

1. reported no typical pattern for the outcome of unsuccessful principals but varied according to school district size;
2. recorded the majority of unsuccessful principals were retired or transferred. The minority resigned or were terminated;
3. revealed that they dealt with unsuccessful principals between two and three years in large and mid-size school districts; small school districts appear to spend a longer period of time;
4. indicated that unsuccessful principals are transferred in small and large school districts to central office and classroom teaching positions.

Circumstances Within The School District

The selected school superintendents in Oregon State:

1. reported school board supported the superintendents' decisions regarding the unsuccessful principal;
2. indicated a variety of significant circumstances occurred in the school district but no clear pattern of circumstances emerged in the study;
3. cited sources of information as contact with the unsuccessful principal, teachers, and parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for Practice

The purpose of this study was to examine superintendents and unsuccessful principals. A study was conducted to obtain information about the behaviors, processes, and outcomes of dealings with principals the superintendents deem as

unsuccessful. A number of the findings have implications for superintendents when confronted with situations that relate to unsuccessful principals. The following recommendations are addressed to school officials and are based on the findings:

1. School superintendents should have a clear understanding of unsuccessful principals and the process of dealing with unsuccessful principals.
2. Because superintendents deal with unsuccessful principals, professional development programs should be initiated to prepare administrators for this aspect of the superintendency.
3. Since dealing with unsuccessful principals requires an average length of three years, superintendents must be prepared to give this situation continuous effort and attention.
4. Most unsuccessful principals retire or are transferred. Superintendents must become aware of the informal methods or avenues of removing unsuccessful principals.
5. The results of the study suggested that sources of information about the unsuccessful principals were contact with the principal, teachers, and parents. Superintendents should give priority to interaction with these individuals to assess the effectiveness of a principalship.
6. School officials and school board members should reflect on personnel policies and practices and institute changes which alleviate the problem of unsuccessful principals.
7. School officials should spend time and resources on the recruitment of principal candidates.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to examine superintendents and unsuccessful principals. The report reviews the results of a self-response questionnaire with thirty

superintendents in Oregon State. The study examined the behaviors, processes, and outcomes of dealing with principals the superintendents deem as unsuccessful.

Because the study was conducted in Oregon State, it is suggested that additional researchers address this topic in other states. Statutes and/or contracts may vary between states. Consequently, a study of different states would be helpful to practitioners. In addition, it is suggested that additional research related to the questions that guided the study be conducted. More detailed information is needed about the specific behaviors, the processes, and the outcomes of dealing with unsuccessful principals. Interview studies are suggested, because they can produce in-depth data not possible with a self-response questionnaire. The interviews are also most appropriate for asking questions of a personal nature which are difficult to structure in a self-response questionnaire.

These recommendations for additional research would provide greater insight into superintendents dealing with unsuccessful principals.

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Mail Identification Number:_____

SUPERINTENDENTS AND UNSUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS: *A STUDY*

PART I -- Background information of respondent. Please begin by responding to some questions about yourself and your school district. Write the appropriate information in the blank.

1. What is the title of your position?_____
2. In your current position, are you also a principal? yes _____ no _____
3. How long have you been in your current position? _____ years
4. What was your previous job title? _____

   Was this previous position in the same district where you now work? Yes_____ No _____
5. What is your age? _____ years
6. What is your gender? _____
7. What is the enrollment of your school district? _____ students

PART II -- For purposes of this study, an unsuccessful principal is one who has been fired, transferred, or "counseled out" of a principalship. Please check √ the appropriate response.

8. Have you ever supervised a principal whom you had to fire, transfer, or "counsel out" of a principalship?

   ☐ No *(If no, you have completed this survey. Thank you for your time. Please return it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope).*

   ☐ Yes (If yes, please proceed) _____

Think of the *LAST* unsuccessful principal you have dealt with and answer these questions. Check √ or fill in the appropriate response.

9. What is the gender of the unsuccessful principal? _____
10. The unsuccessful principal was employed in a: Small school district (400-999) _____

    Mid-size district (1,000-4,999) _____ Large district (5,000-19,999) _____ Other, please specify_____
11. What level was this principal? ☐ Elementary ☐ Middle level/junior high

    ☐ High school ☐ Other (please specify)_____
12. How many years was this unsuccessful principalship? _____ years
13. When this principal was hired, was s/he:

    ☐ New to the district? ☐ Promoted to the principalship from within the district?
14. In this district or any other district, how many unsuccessful principals have you dealt with?_____
15. Was this last case of an unsuccessful principal typical of other unsuccessful principals you have dealt with? ☐ yes ☐ no

(please turn the page)

PART III – Behaviors of Unsuccessful Principals

16. Check √ EACH behavior as it best describes this unsuccessful principal that led to being fired, transferred, or "counseled out" of a principalship.

	No Impact	Some Impact	High Impact
lack of influence over adults	_____	_____	_____
lack of influence over staff	_____	_____	_____
avoidance of situations	_____	_____	_____
avoidance of people	_____	_____	_____
autocratic	_____	_____	_____
unmotivated in principalship	_____	_____	_____
inflexible	_____	_____	_____
inability to relate to ethnic populations	_____	_____	_____
lack of vision	_____	_____	_____
poor community relations	_____	_____	_____
perfectionistic	_____	_____	_____
poor administrative skills	_____	_____	_____
insubordinate	_____	_____	_____
sexually involved with staff	_____	_____	_____
other (please specify) _____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

PART IV -- Process of the Superintendent dealing with the unsuccessful principal

17. Number in order the Superintendent's actions that applied in dealing with this unsuccessful principal (i.e., 1st action, 2nd action, 3rd action, etc.). Leave blank those that do not apply.

_____ conferencing

_____ goal-based evaluation

_____ counseling

_____ probation

_____ other action (please specify) _____

_____ other action (please specify) _____

_____ improvement plan

_____ salary frozen

_____ shadowing

_____ leave with pay

(please continue with next page)

18. What happened to this principal? Number the occurrences that apply (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.).

- ☐ terminated
- ☐ new career
- ☐ retired
- ☐ leave of absence
- ☐ employment out of district (please specify)_____
- ☐ transferred →

If the principal was transferred, was the principal's response: ☐ voluntary ☐ involuntary

Was s/he transferred to:

_____ classroom teacher _____ assistant principal _____ central office (please specify) _____

_____ another principalship within the district (please specify)_____

_____ other (please specify)_____

19. How long did you deal with this unsuccessful principal? Approximately _____ years.

20. Did the school board support you in this process?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other (please specify)_____

PART V -- Circumstances present in the school district while you were dealing with this principal.

21. Rank order the three most significant circumstances (1 - 2 - 3) which were present in the school district during this process.

_____ negotiations problems
_____ building project
_____ problems with superintendent/board relations
_____ levy loss
_____ declining enrollment
_____ staff problems
_____ good community relations
_____ good staff morale
_____ curricular changes
_____ grade configuration changes (K-5, 6-8, 9-12)
_____ redistricting/bussing
_____ influx of minorities
_____ change of demographics around the school
_____ closing school(s)
_____ other (please specify) _____
_____ textbook challenge
_____ lawsuits
_____ poor athletic program
_____ drugs
_____ student unrest
_____ strike
_____ adequate finances
_____ pressure groups

22. To what degree did the factors identified in question #21 impact the way you handled the unsuccessful principal?

☐ great deal ☐ moderate impact ☐ minimal impact ☐ no impact

(please turn the page)

23. Rank order the three sources of information that had the greatest effect on you in dealing with the unsuccessful principal.

_____ Community	_____ School Board
_____ Parents	_____ Students
_____ Teachers	_____ Your contact with the Principal
_____ Support Staff	_____ "I really don't know"
_____ Central Office Administrators	_____ Other (please specify) _____

Please write any additional comments you would like to make about any of the questions or issues raised in this questionnaire.

_____

_____

_____

_____

This completes the questionnaire. Thank you for your time. Please put in envelope and return to:

Joanne Martin
Walla Walla School District
364 South Park Street
Walla Walla, WA 99362

WALLA WALLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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JUDITH G. MULKERIN

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February 1, 1989

Dear Superintendent,

Educators can readily identify successful principals. However, little is known about unsuccessful principals. The enclosed self-response questionnaire is part of a study to determine the characteristics of principals and how superintendents deal with unsuccessful principals.

Your help is needed. You have been randomly selected as one of the 30 superintendents in Oregon to respond to this survey. For this study to be truly represented, it is important that each person selected complete and return this survey. Your answers will be kept confidential.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided by February 16. If you wish to receive a summary of the results of the survey, please circle the mail identification number.

Thank you for you assistance and participation.

Sincerely,

Joanne Martin

Joanne Martin,
Administrative Assistant for
Curriculum and Instruction